the characteristics of the parent plant"; that (in the light of recent work by Pond and others) solution is given (p. 359) as one of the ways by which branch roots make their way through the cortex; that Plateau's experiments (of really popular aspect) are ignored in discussing the significance of flower color in pollination by insects; and that the statolith hypothesis is treated (p. 248) as a generally accepted, correct explanation of geotropism.

Natural selection is still held (p. 409) to explain "very perfectly" the *origin* of new species; in fact, in the light of the *Die Mutationstheorie*, and all the work that has followed from it, this statement and the first half of page 411 read almost like anachronisms.

To list the good points of the book not previously mentioned would require more space than has already been occupied. The endeavor on the part of professional scientific men to popularize their work; to prepare for the layman a readable account of the present status of their science, equally free from unnecessary technicalities, and from statements exaggerated, distorted, or otherwise misleading in the attempt to simplify, and to invest the subject with interest which it is supposed otherwise to lack, is a labor very much worth while, and too frequently left to tyros. One conspicuous value of the book under review is that it acquaints the reader, not only with the results of botanical study, but also with the methods of thought and work by which such knowledge is ascertained. It is unfortunate that the book is much too heavy to be held comfortably in the hands while reading.

C. STUART GAGER

NEWS ITEMS

During Dr. D. T. MacDougal's trip through the Sudan and the Egyptian Desert in January and February, 1912, a considerable collection of herbarium specimens was made and later submitted to Dr. A. B. Rendle and other members of the staff of the department of botany of the British Museum of Natural History. The collection is enumerated by Dr. Rendle in the

September issue of the *Journal of Botany*, and Dr. MacDougal's visit to these regions is commemorated in *Geigeria Macdougalii*, from hill slopes at Sal Lom, Red Sea Province, described by Mr. Spencer Moore.

Mr. W. W. Eggleston left Washington the last of April and returned the 18th of September with over one thousand field numbers for the summer's collection. The first ten days of May were spent about Greycliff, Mont. Then short stops were made at Sidney, Neb., and Medicine Bow, Wyo., on the route to the Stanislaus National Forest, California. From May 19 to July 25, the time was spent about Sonora, California. During the first three weeks of August, Mr. Eggleston was in the region stretching from Lake Pend D'Oreille, Idaho, to the British Columbia line. On the return trip to Washington, Dr. Aven Nelson's Rocky Mountain herbarium was visited.

Frederick S. Page, a graduate of Dartmouth College of the class of 1913, has been appointed curator of the herbarium of the University of Vermont, succeeding the late C. G. Pringle.

Among the European members of the International Phytogeographic Excursion, who have been travelling in the United States since the last of July, and who stopped in New York en route home, were Professor Carl Schröter, of Zurich, and Professor Adolf Engler, director of the Royal Botanical Garden at Berlin. Professor Schröter delivered a lecture on the flora of the Alps, under the auspices of the department of botany of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, October 8. Dr. Engler planted a tree at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, on October 16, and the next day visited the New York Botanical Garden, where he was the guest of honor at a dinner given by Dr. N. L. Britton, at L'Hermitage, at which twenty-five botanists were present.

At a meeting of the scientific directors of the New York Botanical Garden, held October 11, the publication of the work of Mr. Norman Taylor on the local flora was authorized. The book will now be issued as rapidly as possible.

Mr. George R. Johnstone (A.B., 1913, University of Illinois) has been appointed instructor in botany at the Michigan Agricultural College.

Greenheart, the wood which the Isthmian Canal Commission is desirous of securing for use in the construction of docks and similar works in the Panama Canal, because it is said by experts to resist more than any other wood the attacks of marine borers which rapidly destroy piles and other submarine structures, is one of the most valuable of timbers. It is native of tropical South America, and from its bark and fruits is obtained bibirine, which is often used as a febrifuge instead of quinine. The tree is *Nectandra Rodiaei* of the Lauraceae. The wood is of a dark green color, sap wood and heart wood being so much alike that they can with difficulty be distinguished from each other. The heart wood is one of the most desirable of all timbers, particularly in the shipbuilding industry. Indisputable records show that the best grades surpass iron and steel in lasting qualities in salt water, submerged logs having remained intact for one hundred years. In the Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow, there are two pieces of planking which illustrate better than anything else this durable quality. They are both from a wreck which was submerged eighteen years off the west coast of Scotland. The one specimen—greenheart—is merely slightly pitted on the surface, the body of the wood being perfectly sound and untouched, while the other—teak—is almost entirely eaten away. It is extensively used in shipbuilding for keelsons, beams, engine-bearings, and planking, and it is also used in the general arts, but its excessive weight unfits it for many purposes for which its other properties would render it eminently suitable. (*Evening Post*, 18 October.)

Miss Florence A. McCormick, M.S. (Chicago), took up her duties as adjunct professor of agricultural botany at the University of Nebraska on October first.